



USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Mt. Hood National Forest

Clackamas River Ranger District Fire Update

Summer Recreation

Roads

After completing environmental analysis last fall, the Forest signed a decision to clear hazard trees along many forest roads. While the Forest has a couple hundred miles of roads to treat, we've prioritized well-traveled roads that lead to recreation sites. Here are a few updates:

Forest Road (FR) 57: Will probably open in the fall. We received an updated Biological Opinion from US Fish & Wildlife Service last week, which allows us to advertise the contract for clearing hazards & making culvert repairs. Once the ad closes, a contractor is selected & work can begin.

FR 54: Likely won't open this year. Clearing FR 54 is prioritized right behind FR 57. Contract will likely be advertised this summer.

FR 45 (Hillockburn side): Just opened. Will receive hazard trees treatment next year. The lower few miles of FR 45 connecting to Hwy. 224 remain closed due to frequent slides and damage caused by the 36 Pit Fire.

FR 4220 (south portion): Just opened. This restores access between Camp Ten and Horseshoe Lake Campgrounds. Will receive hazard trees treatment next year. *High-clearance required.*

FR 46: Open all the way to Detroit.

Camping

While work clearing out hazard trees, hazmat, and planning for campgrounds is ongoing, there is still much to do within the Riverside and Lionshead Fires burn areas.

This summer the Clackamas River corridor will be primarily day use recreation or dispersed camping (camping with no services). This includes recreation sites outside of burn areas along Forest Roads (FR) 46, 70, and 63. Vista Recreation, the concessionaire that operated most Clackamas River Ranger District campgrounds, did not renew their permit this year. Without Vista, the Forest doesn't have the staff necessary to clean, manage, and maintain the corridor's campgrounds.

Later this summer, the Forest will be readvertising our campgrounds prospectus for companies to bid to manage campgrounds under a 10-year permit. Stay tuned for more info.

Learn more about [dispersed camping](#) and the [7 principles of Leave No Trace](#).

Boating

The Upper Clackamas is a great whitewater experience. River users should continue to be alert for hazards in the river from logs, limbs, and rock slides from burned, eroded slopes. A great way to try out the river is through a river guide, who offer shuttled trips along the Clackamas River. [Check out the list of river guides here.](#)



After a 3-year COVID & fire damage hiatus, the Upper Clackamas Whitewater Festival returned to the corridor in May! The festival celebrated its 37th year on the Forest.



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Trails

The Clackamas River Trail and Riverside Trail both had extensive damage or were completely destroyed in places, but other trails fared better and have reopened. With the help of partners, trail crews will be working on damaged trails this summer. Join a volunteer work party with [Trailkeepers of OR](#).

[Learn more about hiking safely in burn areas.](#)

Other recreation news

Timothy Lake & Lake Harriet are open— access this year is again from the north, via U.S. Hwy. 26.

Olallie Lake Resort has opened for the summer! Some campgrounds south of the Resort remain closed due to damage from the 2020 Lionshead Fire; reservations & updates can be [found on their website](#).



Olallie Lake Resort

Annual Fire Recovery Work Summary

- Cleared hazard trees in 15 campgrounds.
- Removed hazardous materials in Ripplebrook area.
- Initiated design contracts for Ripplebrook area facilities recovery, including the district warehouse and Ripplebrook tree cooler.
- Installed a temporary tree cooler to store tree seedlings before planting in burned areas.



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- Planted native trees on 2,500 acres of land burned in 2020.
- Seeded 50 acres by drone on steep slopes south of Hwy. 224 & FR 54.
- Started contract process for temporary employee housing solutions at Ripplebrook.
- Placed 400 fire-killed trees in Cub Creek to restore floodplain and aquatic habitat. Placed another several hundred fire-killed trees into the Zigzag River & Still Creek to improve salmon habitat.
- Converted 42,500 cubic yards of slash (woody debris & small limbs) into biochar, using an air curtain burner. The biochar is currently being used in soil remediation & forest restoration projects.
- Completed Pipeline Settlement Sale to clear hazard trees in PGE right-of-ways.
- Hired a fire recovery project team to oversee recovery contracts, planning, and implementation.
- Installed safety signs for burned areas & recreation areas.
- Reopened entire FR 46 to the Forest boundary.
- Established partnership with National Forest Foundation for rehabilitating Riverside Trail and Rainbow Campground.
- Established interagency agreement with Federal Highway Admin. for Highway 224 recreation, transportation, and fish passage recovery strategic planning.
- Prepared two contracts for hazard trees and road repairs for FR 57, 5710, 45/Hillockburn, 54/Fish Creek, and other roads. FR 57 & Ripplebrook area bundle is currently out for bid; second contract advertisement should follow later this summer.
- Completed Clackamas Fires Roadside Danger Tree Environmental Assessment, which allowed the Forest to remove hazard trees along forest roads.

Bagby Hot Springs & Ripplebrook Camp Store

In January 2023 a permit was issued to a new concessionaire to operate Bagby Hot Springs for 20 years, through 2042. Bagby Preservation Inc. was founded by long time Bagby Hot Springs advocates Mike & Tamarah Rysavy. The Rysavys bring professional hot

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springs experience, as they already own and operate two hot springs resorts in eastern Oregon.

Bagby Preservation Inc. has much work ahead at the hot springs. The site has been closed since 2020 and much of the facilities are nonfunctional and/or heavily vandalized. "We're working to get staff onsite and begin to restore the facilities to operational capacity. Long-term we want to restore Bagby to the best it has ever been." said Mike Rysavy when asked about their plan. Bagby Hot Springs and the Bagby Campground are still hoping to open this year.



Bagby Preservation Inc. will also be operating Ripplebrook Store under their permit. While the building survived the Riverside Fire, there was a fair amount of interior damage. Work is currently underway to renovate and open the Ripplebrook Store this summer.

Public Clackamas River Corridor Workshop

The Forest has partnered with Federal Highway Administration to create a [Clackamas River / Highway 224 Corridor Wildfire Recovery Strategic Plan](#) which will help the Forest build back fire-damaged sites to better meet current recreation needs. There is a Community Visioning Workshop in Estacada & we'd like you to be there!

- Estacada Library: **Thursday, June 29, 5:30– 7:30**

Learn more & sign-up! Due to the room size, space is limited for the in-person workshop.

Prior to the workshop series, take a look at the [Issues Statement](#), as it provides essential background and context for guiding our conversations. There is also an online feedback form [on the project website](#) if you can't make the workshop.

PGE Clearing Hazard Trees on Right-of-Ways

Mt. Hood National Forest & PGE are currently working together to remove felled hazard trees that were cut following the 2020 Riverside Fire. The material is along 10 miles of powerlines, 5 miles of water pipeline rights of way, and 6 miles of roads between Oak Grove/Three Lynx and Ripplebrook.



By removing the large quantity of felled trees from within the powerline and water pipeline rights-of-ways, we've reduced combustible fuel on the ground, made the road network safer to travel on, and reduced the future fire risk to the resources and infrastructure around the Ripplebrook area and Timber Lake Job Corps.

[Read the whole story on our website.](#)

More information:

Mt. Hood National Forest: www.fs.usda.gov/mthood
Mt. Hood on Facebook: www.facebook.com/mthoodnf
Mt. Hood on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mthoodnf>
Mt. Hood Fire Recovery Info:
www.fs.usda.gov/goto/mthood/firerecovery



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